

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7472

INFO AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

S E C R E T NEW DELHI 3501

EXDIS

E. O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: ENRG

SUBJ: REPRESENTATION AT PRODUCER/CONSUMER PREPARATORY
MEETING

REF: STATE 42898

1. WE HAVE REVIEWED INDIAN ATTITUDES ON VARIOUS ISSUES
ARISING FROM THE PRODUCER/CONSUMER MEETING WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF TWO OF THE THREE MINISTRIES CONCERNED, FINANCE, PETROLEUM AND EXTERNAL AFFAIRS. THE PICTURE WE GET IS OF LOTS OF INTER-MINISTERIAL MEETINGS AND VERY FEW DECISIONS, WITH INDIAN UNLIKELY TO PLAY ANY LEADING ROLE ON THE SUBJECT.

2. THE GOI HAS BEEN CONSIDERING WHAT POSITION TO TAKE ON SUCH ISSUES AS REPRESENTATION AT AND SCOPE OF THE CONFERENCE BUT IS CAUGHT IN ITS TRADITIONAL SQUEEZE ON ALL PETROLEUM AND THIRD WORLD ISSUES COMPOUNDED BY A BUREAUCRATIC STRUCTURE ILL-EQUIPPED TO DEAL WITH THE ISSUE. THE GOI WISHES AT ALL COSTS TO AVOID ANTAGONIZING COUNTRIES SUCH AS IRAN AND SAUDI ARABIA DESPITE ITS FADING EXPECTATIONS OF GETTING MUCH MORE CUT RATE CRUDE AND GENERAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FROM THEM. INDIAN OFFICIALS DISLIKE THE ALGERIANS AND THEIR APPROACH. THEY BELIEVE THAT A LARGE MEETING

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WITH AN AGENDA DEALING WITH ALL RAW MATERIALS IS A SURE FOR-

MULA FOR NO PROGRESS. THE GOI WANTS TO SEE COOPERATION ON PETROLEUM AND GOI OFFICIALS PRIVATELY COMMENT VERY FAVORABLY ON THE FLOOR PRICE CONCEPT. THEY REPEATEDLY CLAIM THEY ARE THE DEVELOPING COUNTRY MOST HURT BY PETROLEUM PRICE DEVELOPMENTS AND ARAB HELP HAS BEEN "TOKEN. BALANCED AGAINST THIS IS A DESIRE NOT TO BECOME ISOLATED FROM THE BULK OF THE THIRD WORLD AND UNCERTAINTY WHETHER SAUDI ARABIA AND IRAN ARE REALLY PREPARED TO INSIST ON A LIMITED MEETING CONFINED TO PETROLEUM ISSUES. IN OTHER WORDS, IF ALGERIA BECOMES ISOLATED, INDIA WOULD BE DELIGHTED BUT IT IS NOT SURE THAT THIS HOW THE SCRIPT WIL UNFOLD. IN THIS CONNECTION, THEY CITE YAMANI'S REFERENCES TO "ALL RAW MATERIALS" DURING HIS VISIT TO DELHI.

3. INSTITUTIONALLY, THERE IS INTENSE BUREAUCRATIC RIVALRY AMONG GOI MINISTRIES, WITH A MINIMUM OF EXPERTISE IN ANY OF THEM. MEETINGS ON THE SUBJECT ARE CURRENTLY CHAIRED BY THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE. SANYAL (SECRETARY, MEA) IS THE MOST SENIOR OFFICIAL INVOLVED BUT HE LACKS STRONG PERSONAL OR INTELLECTUAL CREDENTIALS. THE INDIANS ARE LIKELY TO BE REPRESENTED EITHER BY AMBASSADOR LALL IN A CARETAKER CAPACITY OR A MINISTRY OF FINANCE OFFICIAL SUCH AS M. G. KAUL OR MANMOHAN SINGH. LALL, WITH OR WITHOUT INSTRUCTIONS, IS LIKELY TO TAKE AN ACTIVE ROLE IN ANY MEETING. WHILE THE OTHERS ARE LESS LIKELY TO DO SO. IN ANY CASE THE USDEL IS LIKELY TO FIND THE INDIAN DELEGATE A SYMPATHETIC PERSON WITH WHOM TO TALK. SAXBE

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